

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 03467 230848Z
ACTION NEA-11

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AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 3467

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, MOPS, MARR, LE, IS, UN
SUBJ: SHIDIAC, HADDAD AND THE MILITIAS IN THE SOUTH

1. SUMMARY. AMERICAN JOURNALIST VISITING SOUTH LEBANON BELIEVES THAT HADDAD IS COMPLYING WITH GOL ORDERS, BUT HAS SUBSEQUENTLY LOST CONTROL OF MILITIA IN HIS AREA, WHEREAS MAJOR SHIDIAC IN THE WESTERN SECTOR HAS RETAINED CONTROL OF HIS MILITIAS BUT IS DISAFFECTED WITH GOL. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF SPOKE WITH JONATHAN RANDALL, WASHINGTON POST AND INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE CORRESPONDENT, JUNE 21. RANDALL HAD VISITED SOUTH LEBANON JUNE 20, AFTER HAVING OBTAINED "PASS" FROM PHALANGE MILITARY HEADQUARTERS IN BEIRUT. HE TALKED TO MAJOR SHIDIAC AT AYN IBIL, BUT WAS UNABLE TO SEE COLONEL HADDAD IN MARJAYOUN.

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3. SHIDIAC'S VIEW. RANDALL SAID THAT SHIDIAC HAD TOLD HIM THAT PRIOR TO THE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL HE THOUGHT HE HAD A DEAL WITH GENERALS ERSKINE AND CUQ, BUT THAT IT HAD BEEN SABOTAGED BY LEBANESE PRIME MINISTER HOSS, WHEN THE LATTER STATED PUBLICLY THAT NEITHER HE NOR COLONEL HADDAD REPRESENTED THE LEBANESE AUTHORITIES AND WERE SUPPOSED TO KEEP THEIR FOL-

LOWERS CONFINED TO THEIR PLACES OF ABODE.

4. CONTROL OF THE MILITIAS. RANDALL SAID IT WAS EVIDENT THAT SHIDIAC WAS VERY MUCH IN CONTROL OF THE SITUATION IN THE WESTERN SECTOR, AND THAT THE CHRISTIAN MILITIAS IN THE AREA WERE RESPONSIVE TO HIS ORDERS. (RANDALL HAD BEEN BEMUSED BY SHIDIAC'S SKILLFUL SHIFTING FROM ENGLISH AND FRENCH IN HIS CONVERSATION WITH HIM, TO FREQUENT REGULAR COMMUNICATIONS BY RADIO IN HEBREW (WHICH HE SPOKE WELL) WITH ISRAELIS ACROSS THE BORDER, TO BARKING ORDERS TO HIS FOLLOWERS IN ARABIC.) HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO WHAT HE HAD HEARD, THE SITUATION IN HADDAD'S EASTERN SECTOR WAS QUITE DIFFERENT: THERE, THE MILITIA HAD VIRTUALLY REVOLTED AGAINST HADDAD'S CONTROL. HE THOUGHT THERE WAS ALSO "BAD BLOOD" BETWEEN THE MILITIAS IN THE TWO SECTORS.

5. DISAFFECTION WITH THE ISRAELIS. SHIDIAC HAD SAID THAT HE CONTINUED PERSONALLY CONFIDENT THAT THE ISRAELIS WOULD NEVER LET HIM DOWN. EVEN IF THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT WERE TO TRY TO ABANDON HIM, HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT ISRAELI PUBLIC OPINION WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT HIM AND OBLIGE THE GOVERNMENT TO DO LIKEWISE. HOWEVER, HIS CHRISTIAN MILITIA FOLLOWERS WERE IN TURMOIL. THEY HAD NEVER BELIEVED THAT THE ISRAELIS WOULD LEAVE. IN ADDITION TO A NEW HOSTILITY TOWARDS THE ISRAELIS, THEY NOW BELIEVED THEY HAVE BEEN SOLD DOWN THE RIVER BY PIERRE AND BACHIR GEMAYEL IN BEIRUT.
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6. A NEW MODUS VIVENDI? RANDALL SAID HE DREW THE CONCLUSION THAT SHIDIAC'S PRINCIPAL PROBLEM WAS A MATTER OF FACE. SHIDIAC COMPLAINED TO HIM UNIFIL SEEMED WILLING TO DEAL WITH YASAR ARAFAT AS A LEGITIMATE LEADER, BUT NOW WITH HIMSELF. "I WANT TO DEAL WITH THE UN, BUT NOT BE HUMILIATED." SHIDIAC HAD APPARENTLY, HOWEVER, PRETTY MUCH BURNED HIS BRIDGES WITH THE LEBANESE ARMY, AND TOLD RANDALL THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT HE WOULD EVER BE REINTERGRATED.
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